HE WORSHIPED THE GROUND...
HE BURIED HER IN.
MURDER MESSIAH ANNUAL
You won't believe what Tim Seeley and Jethro Morales have in store for you!
image
$5.99
COVER A
HACK/SLASH

CASSIE HACK IS THE LONE SURVIVOR OF AN ATTACK BY A SLASHER CALLED THE LUNCH LADY... A SLASHER THAT HAPPENED TO BE HER MOTHER! NOW, SHE TRAVELS THE WORLD WITH HER MONSTROUS PARTNER AND FRIEND VLAD HUNTING DOWN AND DESTROYING SLASHERS WHEREVER THEY FIND THEM!

HACK/SLASH™

WRITTEN BY TIM SEELEY ART BY JETHRO MORALES
COLORS BY MARK ENGLERT LETTERS BY CRANK!
EDITS BY JAMES LOWDER
COVERS BY TIM SEELEY & MARK ENGLERT AND CHRISSIE ZULLO

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CHAPTER ONE

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA.
TWO DAYS AGO.
HOT LICKS STUDIOS
OH BABY, IT AIN'T S'POSED TO SMELL LIKE THAT...
HONEY, YOU MIGHT WANNA GET THAT CHECKED.
ARE YOU SURE THESE LYRICS AREN'T LIKE, RETARDED, JEFF?
KID, IF THERE'S ONE THING I LEARNED AS THE FRONT MAN FOR THE GREATEST METAL BAND OF ALL TIME, IT'S HOW TO SMELL A HIT WHEN I HEAR ONE.
THIS TRACK IS GOING TO HAVE US SHITTING MONEY.
SPEAKING OF...YOU JUST KEEP WORKING ON THE HIGH NOTES IN THE BRIDGE.
I'M GONNA GO DROWN SOME CIGARS.
EW.

"I AIN'T GONNA LOVE YOU 'TIL YOU WASH THOSE BALLS. THEY'RE PEELIN' PAINT OFFA WALLS"?
OH FER CHRIST--
THUMP
THUMP
JEFF, I CAN'T HEAR YOU UNLESS YOU TALK INTO THE MIC.
OH MY GOD!
OH NO.
JEFF!
NOW WHERE YOU RUNNIN' OFF TO, PRECIOUS?

HIGHWAY 70.
NEAR GREENFIELD.
FORMER STATE OF INDIANA.
CRACHOOM
FOURTEEN YEARS FROM NOW.
GET UP, JESSIE. WE HAVE TO RUN-- NOW!
I AM NOT LOSING YOU TO THESE FUCKING STAB-HAPPIES.
GRAMMA, LET'S JUST LAY DOWN. IT'S TOO HARD TO RUN...
CHILD OF DIONYSUS.
MURDER MESSIAH BROUGHT US A GIFT.
AND NOW WE SHARE IT WITH YOU.
MOVE!

NO!
KILL GRAMMA.
KILL GRAMMA.
KILL GRAMMA.
Y'ALL MIGHT WANNA COVER YOUR EARS.
Rehto hcae kcatta.

SHUNK
SLSH
RRRAGH!
GRAH!
SHUCK

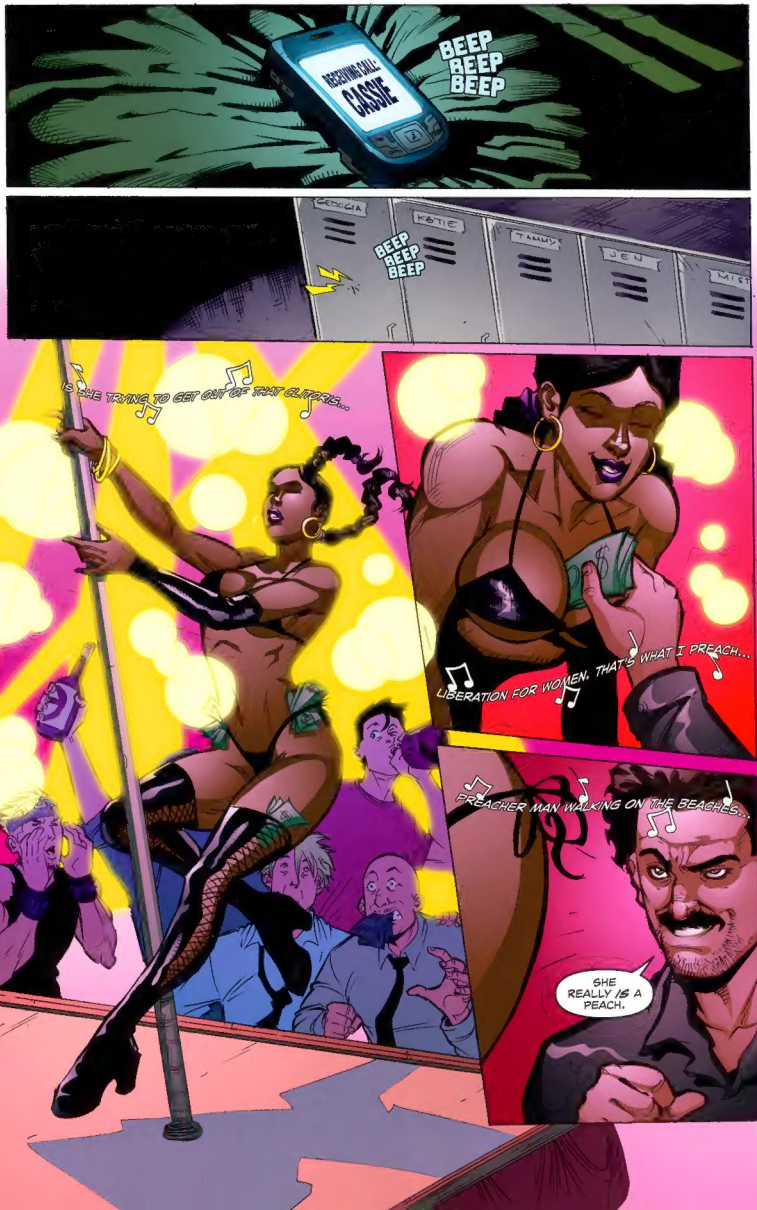
THANK YOU.
YOU SAVED US.
ACTUALLY, IT'S MY FAULT THEY ATTACKED YOU.
THEY WERE LOOKIN' FOR ME.

SO YOU MIGHT WANNA SCOOT--
CUZ I'M GONNA HAVE *AKAKIOS* HIMSELF ON MY ASS ANY MINUTE...

AND I STILL GOT ABOUT THIRTY MILES TO GO UNTIL I HIT EMINENCE.

EMINENCE, INDIANA.
NOW.
SOOOO...
WHO WANTS TO PLAY SOME SCATTERGORIES?
MAYBE IF YOU TOOK OFF THE MASK, THIS WOULD SEEM MORE LIKE A VISIT...
AND LESS LIKE WE'RE HERE TO ENSURE LISA AND CHRIS AREN'T KILLED.
Y'KNOW THAT WOULD ACTUALLY MAKE ME FEEL LESS LIKE I FORGOT TO DRESS UP FOR A COSTUME PARTY.
BEEP BEEP
HOLD ON.
LISA. EVERYTHING OKAY THERE?
YEAH. NOTHING UNUSUAL SINCE THE BREAK-IN.
BUT WE DO APPRECIATE THE... UH...GUARDS.
WE CAN'T TAKE ANY RISKS.
WHOEVER STOLE THE COMPUTER AND HIT YOU KNOWS WHO AND WHERE OUR FRIENDS AND ENEMIES ARE.
LOCAL MUSICIAN FOUND DEAD.
THAT INFO HAS ALREADY COST SIX SIXX HIS DOUCHEBAG LIFE.
AND SIXX'S LITTLE INGÉNUE IS MISSING.
WHOEVER KILLED HIM PROBABLY TOOK HER.

HE'S IN FLORIDA?
OH NO-- GEORGIA AND GERTRUDE!
YEAH, WE THOUGHT OF THAT. GERTRUDE'S IN DENMARK WITH ONE OF HER OLD BOYFRIEND'S BANDS.
AND MARGARET-- ER, GEORGIA HASN'T CALLED BACK.
LOOK, I GOTTA GO. I'M GONNA NEED A LOT MORE CAFFEINE TO DO THIS DRIVE IN EIGHTEEN HOURS FLAT.
OH, AND TELL CHRIS I WAS RIGHT. HACK/SLASH, INC. WAS A STUPID FUCKING IDEA.
GEORGIA IS FINE.
I KNOW THIS, YES?
NO OFFENSE, VLAD, BUT YOU ALWAYS THINK THE FUTURE WILL TURN OUT WELL.
YOU'RE MISTER BRIGHT-AND-FUCKING-ROSY.
GEORGIA
SOMETIMES THINGS REALLY DO TURN OUT DARK AND BLOODY.


INCOMING CALL:
CASSIE
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
CORRINA
KATIE
TAMMY
JEN
MIKE
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
IS SHE TRYING TO GET OUT OF THAT CLIP?RO...
LIBERATION FOR WOMEN. THAT'S WHAT I PREACH...
PREACHER MAN WALKING ON THE BEACHES...
SHE REALLY IS A PEACH.

FOURTEEN YEARS FROM NOW.
EVERY DAY I SPEND HERE, I ASK MYSELF THE SAME QUESTIONS:
WOULD I HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF JUST DYING IN THAT FLAMING WRECK?*
AT LEAST THEN I COULDA GONE TO A PROPER HELL INSTEAD OF FOURTEEN YEARS INTO THE FUTURE, WHERE HALF THE U.S. IS CONTROLLED BY A NUTJOB DEATH CULT AND MR. MURDER MESSIAH HIMSELF, AKAKIOS OF THE BLACK LAMP.
*SEE HIS SERIES ONE SHOT 13-17 "FUTURE CONSCIOUS JIM"
BUT I ALSO WONDER IF MAYBE THIS IS HOW I HAVE TO EVEN THE SCALES. PAY BACK FOR ALL THE BAD I DONE.
I PULLED A MARTY MCFLY ONCE ALREADY AND SHOT MYSELF INTO THE FUTURE.
I CAST A SPELL TO ESCAPE CERTAIN DEATH, AND NOW I CAN'T GET THE SAME RESULT NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I TRY. BUT I MIGHT KNOW A WAY TO CHANGE THAT--AND FIX THIS WHOLE MESS.
FIGURE THE DEBT OUGHT TO BE JUST ABOUT CLEARED AFTER THAT.

TOP BRASS GENTLEMEN'S CLUB.
TAMPA, FLORIDA.
NOW.
GEORGIA!
THERE'S A HOT CHICK ASKING FOR YOU IN BOOTH NINE.
THANKS, TAMMY.
POP POP
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, SUG--
UM... COME OVER HERE AND... UH...
SHAKE THAT ASS?
CASSIE.
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOUR MIND GAMES TONIGHT, SO IF YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO TORMENT ME--
NO! MARGARET, WAIT!
DON'T USE MY REAL FUCKING NAME.
OH, SHIT. SORRY.
LOOK, I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
OH? YOU HAD NOTHING TO SAY TO ME LAST TIME I SAW YOU.
WHAT'S CHANGED?
I SUCK AT THIS RELATIONSHIP SHIT, SO I'M JUST GONNA SKIP TO THE END...
YOU'RE IN DANGER. YOU'RE GOING TO LET ME PROTECT YOU, OR SO HELP ME I WILL KICK THE FUCK OUT OF YOU.

MY, HOW YOU'VE MATURED IN OUR TIME APART.
DOC, THIS WOMAN TRIED TO GROPE ME.
CAN YOU ESCORT HER OUT?
SER.OUSLY?
HOT.
GEORGIA, DON'T WALK AWAY.
WATCH MY ASS LEAVE.
TOUGH BREAK, KID.
JUST CUZ YOU'RE A LADY DON'T MEAN YOU CAN TOUCH THE BROADS.
I FORGIVE YOU FOR TOUCHING ME, BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO DO ME A FAVOR.
DON'T LET GEORGIA OUT OF YOUR SIGHT.
THAT DIDN'T GO WELL.
HE WAS HERE.
AND HE LEFT YOU A NOTE.
CASSIE HACK

EMINENCE.
...AND LISA LETS PEOPLE KEEPS PETS HERE WHEN THEY TRAVEL.
IF VENUS AND I HAD ANY PETS, THEY WOULD BE HERE ALL THE TIME.
I THOUGHT SHE SAID HER NAME WAS AVA?
YES, SHE PREFERS THAT NAME.
HOW OLD IS SHE? I MEAN I KNOW SHE WAS BRED TO LOOK LIKE THAT, BUT I FEEL GUILTY WHEN I LOOK AT HER.
NOT AS GUILTY AS I FEEL.
UH... RIGHT.
OH, HEY, YOU CAN MEET OUR UGLY STEPCHILD!
POOCH, WHY ARE YOU HIDING UNDER--?
GROWF ROWF ROWF ROWF!
Keep the dark-eyed man-thing away from Pooch!
SHIT.
I DON'T THINK HE LIKES YOU.

WHO THE FUCK IS "DALE WILDMAN"?
AFTER OUR MOST RECENT ENEMIES, HE SOUNDS...NORMAL, YES?
HE'S PLAYING US. HE KNEW WE'D COME HERE.
NOW HE'S TELLING US WHERE HE HAS SIXX'S CHICK.
HE WANTS TO SPLIT US UP.
WHICH IS WHY YOU WILL TAKE THE CAR FOR THE GIRL AND I WILL WATCH GEORGIA.
I SWEAR, IT'S LIKE WE DON'T EVEN HAVE TO TALK ANYMORE.
DON'T GET KILLED.
HURR. YES. YOU EITHER.
MISTER BRIGHT-AND-FUCKING-ROSY.
THAT IS ME. HURRR.

FOURTEEN YEARS FROM NOW...
TWO MONTHS AGO, MY TIME, I MET CASSIE HACK AND HER PARTNER VLAD. FOURTEEN YEARS AGO TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.
WHEN I FIRST GOT TO THIS TIME, AFTER MY SPELL MISHAP, I STARTED ASKIN' QUESTIONS, AND THAT LANDED ME IN A VERY SMALL PRISON CELL.
THAT'S WHEN I MET VLAD AGAIN.
THROUGH VLAD I LEARNED THAT A CULT CALLED THE BLACK LAMP SOCIETY HAD USED SOME KINDA TOXIN TO TURN AN ENTIRE CITY INTO CRAZED MURDERERS, TWELVE YEARS BEFORE.
ONLY THOSE THAT ACCEPTED THE TEACHINGS OF THE CULT'S LEADER, AKAKIOS, THE MURDER MESSIAH, WOULD BE SAFE FROM THE STAB-HAPPIES.
THE TOXIN SPREAD, AND THE GOVERNMENT EVENTUALLY QUARANTINED A BIG AREA. THE GENIUSES IN WASHINGTON THOUGHT THEY WERE TRAPPING THE CULTISTS, BUT THEY REALLY JUST GAVE THEM THEIR OWN NATION.
THE BLACK LAMP DESTROYED ITS ENEMIES. CASSIE AND HER ALLIES WERE KILLED. ALL EXCEPT VLAD, WHO WAS TORTURED AND TORMENTED BY AKAKIOS HIMSELF.

VLAD'S MIND AND MEMORY WERE PRETTY SHATTERED BY YEARS OF PAIN. BUT HE DID REMEMBER ME 'N' MY SPELLS.
HE REMEMBERED SOMETHING ELSE, TOO.
BEFORE EVERYTHING WENT TO HELL, CASS AND VLAD HAD FOUGHT SOME GUY NAMED SIX SIXX, WHO COULD TRAVEL BETWEEN WORLDS WITH HIS MAGIC GUITAR.
AFTER THEY'D BEAT HIM, THEY LEFT THE GUITAR WITH TRUSTED FRIENDS. FRIENDS KILLED IN AKAKIOS'S PURGE.
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A SPELL TO TAKE ME BACK, BUT VLAD FIGURED THE GUITAR MIGHT DO IT. MAYBE HE'S RIGHT. MAYBE NOT...
I HAVE A HISTORY OF JUMPING OUT OF THE FRYIN' PAN STRAIGHT INTO A GREASE FIRE.
FUCK IT. IT CAN'T GET MUCH WORSE THAN THIS.

OUTSKIRTS OF THE GREEN SWAMP, FLORIDA.
HEY, YOU.
HEY, GIRL.
WHY YOU SNEAKIN' AROUND OUT THERE?
COME ON IN.
LOOKIT YOU, ALL STEALTHY LIKE A KITTY CAT.
YOU PARK THAT CAR DOWN THE ROAD BY THE TRAIL MARKER?
SAW A FOX CROSS THE ROAD THERE ONCE.
WHAT.
THE.
FUCK.
LEMME TURN ON SOME LIGHTS.
YOU EAT?
I BROUGHT SAMMICHES.

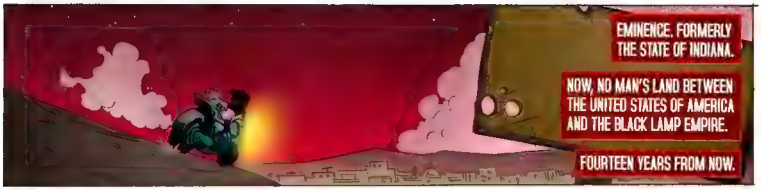
NOT A TALKER. THAT'S COOL.
A LOT OF PEOPLE IN OUR FIELD ARE THE QUIET TYPES.
AND WHAT FIELD IS THAT, DALE?
HUNTERS. PREDATORS. FUCKIN' WOLVES AMONG THE SHEEP.
SEE, I FIRST HEARD ABOUT YOU A COUPLE O' YEARS AGO.
I WAS LOOKIN' FOR OTHERS LIKE MYSELF.
SEE, I'M A CHILD OF A SERIAL KILLER. MY OLD MAN WAS DICK WILDMAN, THE OUTHOUSE STRANGLER.
AND MY MOM? SHE SAW OL' DICK ON THE TV WHEN HE WAS INCARCERATED FOR CHOKIN' OUT ALL THOSE LI'L CHIPPIES WHO WAS JUST TRYIN' TO TAKE A PISS.
'COURSE, SHE FELL IN LOVE ON THE SPOT AND STARTED MAILIN' HIM LETTERS.
LOTSA GIRLS DID. HELL, NOTHIN' MAKES A WOMAN HOTTER THAN A DAMN ALPHA MALE PREDATOR.
BUT THE OL' MAN ONLY HAD EYES FOR MY MOM.
THEY GOT MARRIED WHILE HE WAS IN THE HOLE, AND ONE CONJUGAL VISIT LATER, SPLOOT, THERE I COME.

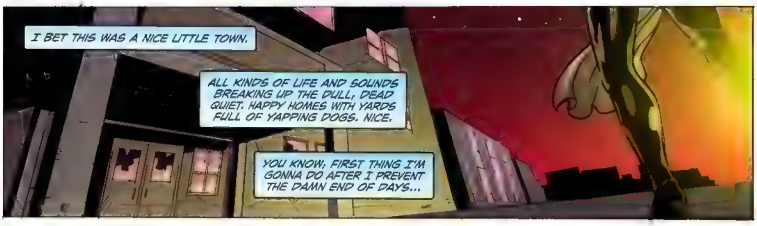
IF YOU THINK THAT BECAUSE MY MOM AND YOUR DAD WERE SERIAL KILLERS THAT WE SHOULD BE FRIENDS, YOU'RE FUCKING STUPIDER THAN YOU LOOK.
PUT THE CLAWS AWAY, KITTEN.
THIS IS JUST A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO SAVAGE BEASTS...
WHEREIN ONE OF THE BEASTS WILL SAW A LITTLE BITCH'S HEAD OPEN IF THE OTHER BEAST DON'T HEAR HIM OUT.
YOU'RE ASSUMING I GIVE A SHIT IF YOU KILL HER.
YOU AND THE BIG FUCKER ARE ALWAYS OFFERIN' TO HELP PEOPLE WITH THEIR PROBLEMS LIKE SOME KINDA LOW-RENT A-TEAM.
I'M PRETTY SURE YOU CARE ABOUT PEOPLE.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T, I KNOW YOU CARE ABOUT THAT LITTLE BLACK STRIPPER YOU DROVE HALFWAY 'CROSS THE COUNTRY TO CHECK ON.
I'M KEEPIN' HER IN THE BANK AS INSURANCE.
ANYWAY, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, AND MAYBE MY FIRST THOUGHT WAS THAT YOU AND ME'D BE THE PERFECT SHE-WOLF AND HE-WOLF.
I'M GONNA GO AHEAD AND GIVE YOU THAT.
BUT, SEE, THE MORE I LOOKED INTO YOU, AND YOUR MOM, THE MORE I REALIZED SOMETHIN' ELSE WAS GOING ON.
I FOUND THOSE FRIENDS OF YOURS, THE ONES WITH THE LITTLE WEBSITE.
AND I GOT A GOOD LOOK AT ALL THOSE FILES YOU'VE BEEN KEEPIN'.

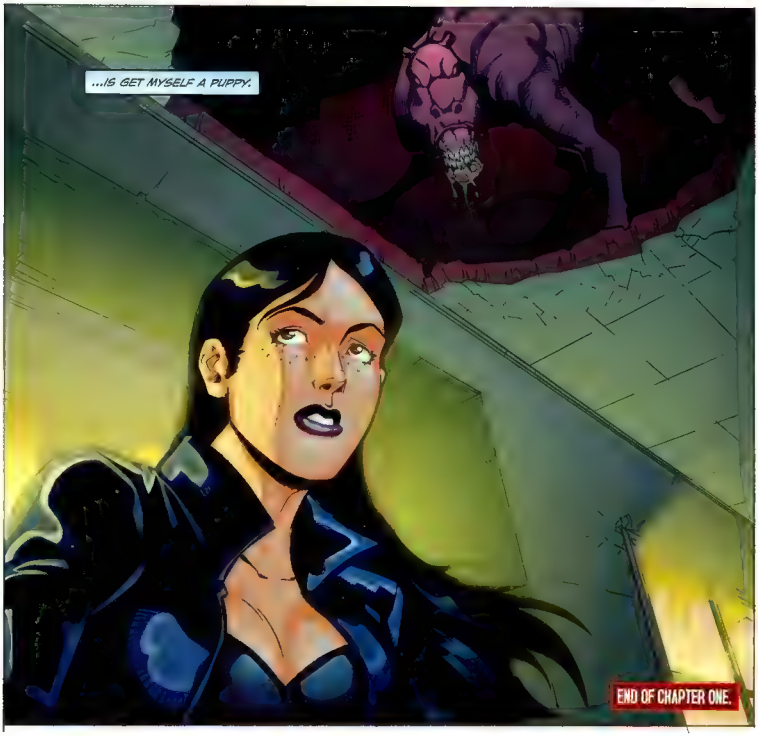
I GOT EIGHTEEN VICTIMS. EIGHTEEN! AND I AIN'T BEEN CAUGHT.
I'VE GOT DAHMER, RAMIREZ, AND MY DADDY BEAT!
BUT IF THERE'S SOME WOLVES WHO CAN'T EVEN DIE, THAT CAN KILL AND KEEP ON KILLIN', THEN MY KIND IS NO LONGER THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN!
NEVER CAN BE TOP.
DALE WILDMAN AIN'T SECOND TO NO ONE.
DALE WILDMAN DON'T FLIT AROUND THE BIGGER BEASTS PICKIN' UP LI'L SCRAPS OF MEAT.
I KNOW ALL ABOUT THEM SLASHERS, EXCEPT FOR ONE THING YOU NEVER REVEALED.
ONE THING YOU BEEN KEEPIN' TO YOURSELF.
I WANNA KNOW HOW I BECOME ONE.

NEF.
HOME TO THE NEFLORDS.
I/WE MUST CEASE THIS BLUBBERING!!
I/WE MUST FORGET OUR GREAT SORROW AND FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND: REPLACING THE AVATAR WITH A MORE POWERFUL AND LOYAL SERVANT TO SUPPLY US WITH FRESH VESSELS FOR OUR SEED.
ASHCAN GUT

TAMPA, FLORIDA.
WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO, VLAD?
HURRM. I HAD A FIGHT WITH SUPERVILLIANS A FEW DAYS AGO.
ALSO, I WATCHED DANCING WITH THE STARS ON THE TV.
WAIT, YOU MEAN LIKE DR. DOOM?
NO, I BELIEVE THE DANCING STAR WAS NAMED NEIL PATRICK HARRIS.
THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME COME WITH YOU.
WHATEVER BEEF I HAVE WITH CASSIE, I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE YOU WAIT AROUND FOR HER IN A STRIP CLUB PARKING LOT.
GOOD THING GERTRUDE IS OUT OF TOWN, HUH?
YES. BEING A GROUPIE SLUT HAS WORKED WELL FOR HER TODAY.
YOU DON'T FEEL A LITTLE JEALOUS THAT SHE'S OFF WITH ONE OF HER BOY TOYS?
I MEAN, SHE WAS YOUR "FIRST."
JEALOUS?
HURR. NO. I DO NOT THINK SO.
BUT YOU DID GET REALLY JEALOUS WHEN I WAS WITH CASSIE.


EMINENCE. FORMERLY THE STATE OF INDIANA.
NOW, NO MAN'S LAND BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE BLACK LAMP EMPIRE.
FOURTEEN YEARS FROM NOW.


I BET THIS WAS A NICE LITTLE TOWN.
ALL KINDS OF LIFE AND SOUNDS BREAKING UP THE DULL, DEAD QUIET. HAPPY HOMES WITH YARDS FULL OF YAPPING DOGS. NICE.
YOU KNOW, FIRST THING I'M GONNA DO AFTER I PREVENT THE DAMN END OF DAYS...


...IS GET MYSELF A PUPPY.
END OF CHAPTER ONE.

THIS IS HER BODY.

THIS IS YOUR BLOOD.

MURDER MESSIAH

CHAPTER 2

LISTEN TO ME!
KNIVES!

CHAPTER TWO

OUTSKIRTS OF THE GREEN SWAMP, FLORIDA.
WELL, HACK, WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?

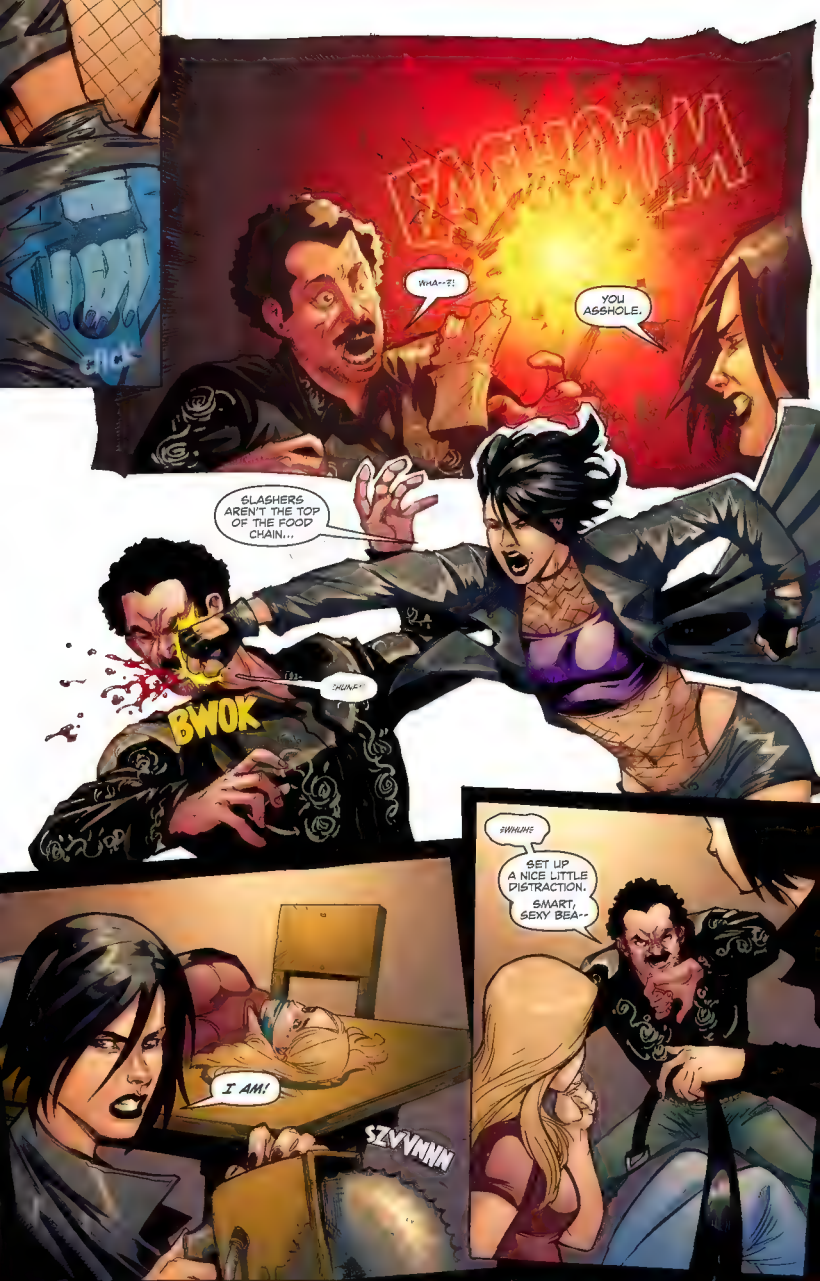
YOU GONNA TELL ME HOW I BECOME A SLASHER OR AM I SPLITTIN' THIS HERE BITCH-WOOD?

MAN, YOU ARE A COLD ONE.
YA THINK LITTLE RACHEL HERE WILL BE MAD THAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO LET ME PUT A NASTY SCAR ACROSS HER FOREHEAD?

THAT LITTLE STRIPPER GIRL?
YOU REALLY THINK SHE MATTERS TO ME, DALE?

IF I'M SO MUCH LIKE YOU, DO YOU REALLY THINK I CARE ABOUT ANYONE?

AREN'T THEY ALL JUST BODIES TO US?
AND YOU KNOW WHAT BODIES ARE FOR...


click
WHA--?!
YOU ASSHOLE.
SLASHERS AREN'T THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN...
UNH--!
BWOK
I AM!
SZVVNNN
UNHUH!
SET UP A NICE LITTLE DISTRACTION.
SMART, SEXY BEA--

STUPID. GOT COCKY. USED DYNAMITE. AND THERE WERE PROBABLY SOME FUMES LEFT IN THE GAS RESERVOIR UNDERNEATH THE PLACE...
FUNH...
THIS PLACE IS GOING TO COME DOWN. GOTTA GO. MOVE. LEAVE.
NO SIGN OF DALE. GOOD...
KRRAASH
FUCK YOU, DALE. I HOPE YOU'RE DEAD.

Hrrahkkk!
UHK!
EMINENCE. FORMERLY THE STATE OF INDIANA.
NOW, NO MAN'S LAND BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE BLACK LAMP EMPIRE.
OH MY FUCKING GOD. WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!
NO WAY I JUMPED INTO THE FUTURE AND DROVE ACROSS THE HELL THAT USED TO BE AMERICA JUST TO GET MAULED BY THIS BAD SPECIAL EFFECT.
Hrraaaiiiiiggggh
Moorb pleh!
KO
EVERY WITCH GETS SOME KIND OF BROOM...
YEAH, I CHOSE A MOTORCYCLE. COOL, HUH?
ALL I NEED IS THAT GUITAR, AND I CAN SAY GOOD-BYE TO THIS WORLD, TO AKAKIOS, AND...
...TO THIS GODDAMN PINK DEMON HORSE.

GODDAMN IT. THIS WOULDA BEEN HARD ENOUGH WITHOUT THE THREAT OF IMMINENT DIGESTION.
GHA!
Urrreaaakk!
WINSH. CABBIE. I'M SORRY.
I'M 'SPECIALLY SORRY TO YOU, VLAD.
Vlad?

THE APARTMENT OF MARGARET CRUMP A.K.A. GEORGIA PEACHES.
TAMPA, FLORIDA.
TODAY.
I DO NOT THINK BEING JEALOUS...
...MEANS THAT YOU ARE IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE, YES?
YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT THAT IT MEANS SOMETHING.
I--I WOULD RATHER EAT THE CHEERIOS THAN TALK OF IT.
LOOK, I GET IT. NO ONE ON EARTH CAN RELATE BETTER THAN ME WHEN IT COMES TO CASSIE. I MEAN, I STILL LOOK AT GUYS AND THINK, "OOOH HOT!" SO I GUESS I'M NOT--I DUNNO, A LESBIAN OR WHATEVER LABEL PEOPLE PUT ON IT.
BUT AT SOME POINT, I KNEW THAT WHAT I FELT FOR CASSIE WASN'T "FRIEND...Y," Y'KNOW?
YES.
BEEP BEEP BEEP
IT IS CASSANDRA.
VLAD. I'M OUTSIDE.

CASSANDRA!
HEY...I'M GOOD, I'M GOOD.
I THINK RACHEL'S IN SHOCK.
AND I CAN'T HEAR VERY WELL RIGHT NOW.
KINDA DIZZY. BIG BOMB.
I NEED YOU TO GET HER TO THE HOSPITAL.
YES.
MUNH.
FUUUCK.
FEELS LIKE I SPENT THE NIGHT AT A DETHKLOK CONCERT.
CASS E.
HEY, MARGARET.
CAN I COME IN?

EMINENCE, INDIANA.
THE FUTURE.
GET THE FUCK OFF ME!!
JESUS. I THINK I WAS BETTER OFF WITH YOU TRYING TO KILL ME.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MUCH SPIT!
Most humble Pooch apologizes for his loyal licking.
So long, so long, since Pooch has seen his beloved friend Vlad.
Oh, how Pooch laments the loss of his friends and masters, Lisa and Chris.
But always did Pooch know that misshapen Vlad was still alive and would come back to him some day.
LOOK, POOCH, ABOUT THAT. I MET VLAD IN A REALLY BAD PLACE, AND HE SENT ME HERE TO FIND SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT.
Vlad is not coming for Pooch?
NO, HE'S NOT. I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.
BUT IF YOU HELP ME FIND SIX SIXX'S GUITAR, I'LL MAKE SURE YOU NEVER LOSE YOUR FRIENDS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

MARGARET!!
JEEZ, YOU DON'T HAVE TO YELL SO LOUD. I WAS RIGHT OUTSIDE.
SORRY!
I CAN'T REALLY TELL HOW LOUD I AM!
I NEED SOME HELP.
I CAN'T PULL IT OUT.
OH GOD.
JUST YANK IT OUT. QUICK.
AH!
UNGF.
I'M SO SORRY. DID IT HURT?
ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU DID GOOD.
YOU DID GOOD.

OH, CASSIE.
NO.
NO, NO, NO.
WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE. THIS IS WHERE IT GOES BAD.
WHERE YOU PUSH ME AWAY. YOU'VE NEVER SAID THE RIGHT THING.
YOU'VE NEVER SAID ANYTHING.
I CAN'T DO THIS UNTIL I KNOW SOMETHING.
I'LL BE IN BED.
IF YOU CAN FIND THE RIGHT WORDS, I WANT YOU TO JOIN ME.

Loyal and humble Pooch kept everything all of Master Chris's toy super-men and his female picture books.
All of Mistress Lisa's ripped-dress novels. Even when he knew they were dead, Pooch kept their things.
Pooch can smell them still.
The Neffish guitar is here.
THIS MASK. ISN'T THIS THE SYMBOL OF AKAKIOS--THE JACK O'LANTERN?
Yes. Pooch knew the dark-eyed man was bad. But Cassie trusted him, so Pooch trusted him.
It is Pooch's fault the Samhain-man killed her.
WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP
"WAIT. AKAKIOS KILLED CASSIE. WHO'S SAMHAIN?"
"Samhain was Cassie's friend..
"But Samhain was also Akakios."
I WANT THE GUITAR. DO NOT DAMAGE IT.
AND THE GIRL?
KILL THE GIRL.

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO THIS. IT SHOULD BE OKAY FOR ME TO FEEL GOOD EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.
BUT THIS CAN'T JUST BE ABOUT ME GETTING OFF, THEN RIDING AWAY THE NEXT DAY. BECAUSE THAT'S NOT MARGARET.
MAYBE THOSE ARE THE WORDS SHE HAS TO HEAR:
'I WANT TO TOUCH YOU. I WANT TO MAKE LOVE. BUT I CAN'T BE YOUR PARTNER OR YOUR LIVE-IN GIRLFRIEND. BECAUSE THAT'S NOT ME...
'IF I'M GOING TO HAVE A SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP, IT NEEDS TO BE WITH SOMEONE WHO WON'T BE IN DANGER...
'IT HAS TO BE SOMEONE WHO CAN'T DIE...
'I LOVE YOU. I WANT YOU...
'AND THOUGH I CAN'T GIVE YOU FOREVER...
'...I WANT TO GIVE YOU TONIGHT.'

MARGARET...
WELL HEY THERE, KITTY CAT. YOUR EARS STILL RINGIN'?
IF YOU CAN'T HEAR ME TOO WELL, I KNOW YOU CAN SEE WHAT I FOUND.
ISN'T SHE A SWEET LITTLE PEACH?

THIS IS PERFECT! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GO BACK TO BEFORE SAMHAIN REALIZES HE'S AKAKIOS!
I CAN FIX ALL OF THIS!
Yes?
Humble Pooch has saved the world?

NO, I SAVED THE WORLD.
OH FUCK.

I'VE BEEN PERSONALLY COLLECTING ALL UNEARTHLY ARTIFACTS FOUND WITHIN THE BLACK LAMP'S DOMAIN. I WOULD LIKE THE GUITAR.

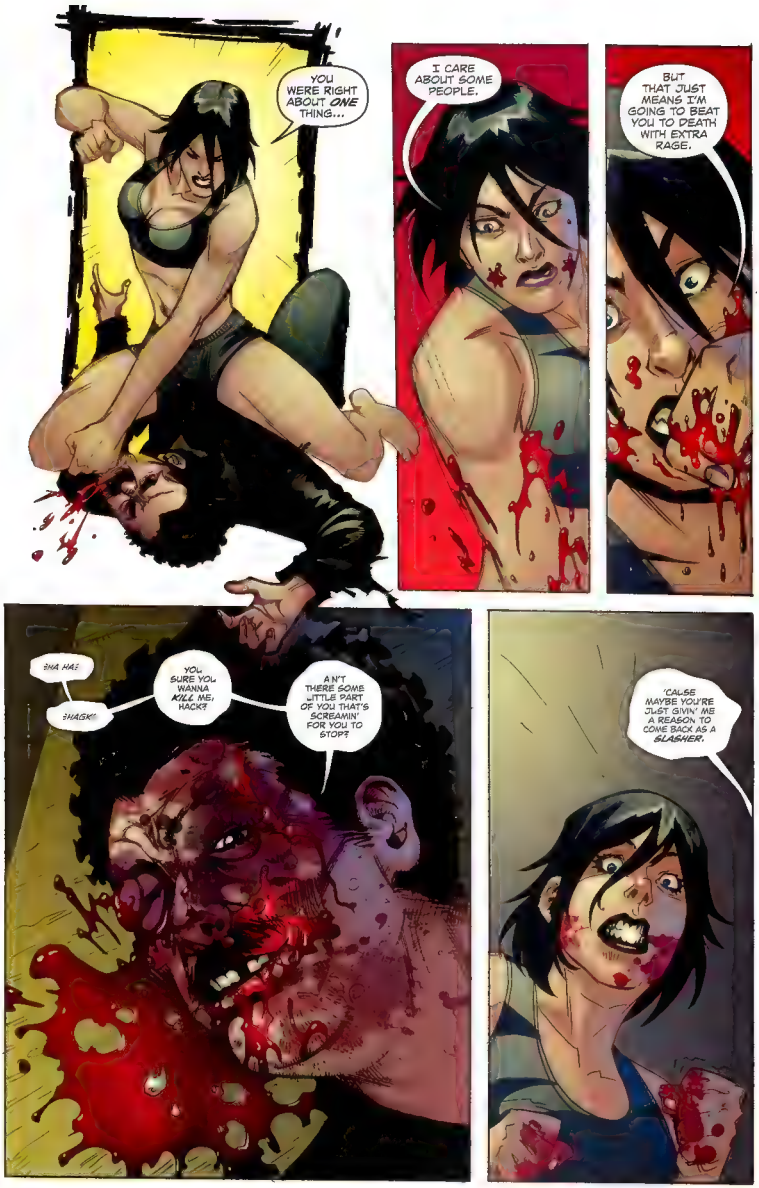
Vile, dark-eyed man won't let gunmen fire at the guitar. Run.
BUT--

Humble, patient Pooch has waited many years!!

NO. I WISH TO MOUNT ITS HEAD ON MY WALL.
GET THE GIR-.

RRRRAH!?
WOOF!
DAMN, KITTEN, I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TIME TO LEAVE YOUR LITTLE SWEETHEART THERE ALL GUTTED AND TRUSSED UP FOR YOU AS A PRESENT.
BUT, Y'KNOW, THAT MAGIC GEE-TAR DIDN'T WORK QUITE LIKE I EXPECTED.
I MEAN, I PLOTTED OUT THE CHOCOLATE BUNNY'S ADDRESS AND I THOUGHT I'D MEMORIZED THE CHORDS LIKE SIXX'S NOTES SAID, BUT WOULDN'T YA KNOW IT...
TUNK
FIRST ATTEMPT I ENDED UP IN THE NEIGHBOR'S PLACE. 'COURSE, THAT WAS BETTER THAN THAT EXPLODIN' GAS STATION YOU LEFT ME IN.
WHUMP
HUNH!
SHUT--
THE FUCK--
UP!!

Moorb!!
VVRRUMMM
GOOD GIRL.
NOW, DRIVE GOOD AND STRAIGHT; CUZ I HAVE TO PLUCK SOME STRINGS AND CAST A SP--
SPLUCK
KKKRSH
OONF!


YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT *ONE* THING...
I CARE ABOUT SOME PEOPLE.
BUT THAT JUST MEANS I'M GOING TO BEAT YOU TO DEATH WITH EXTRA RAGE.
¿HA HA!
¿HASK!?
YOU SURE YOU WANNA *KILL* ME, HACK?
A'N'T THERE SOME LITTLE PART OF YOU THAT'S SCREAMIN' FOR YOU TO STOP?
'CAUSE MAYBE YOU'RE JUST GIVIN' ME A REASON TO COME BACK AS A *SLASHER*.

POOR LITTLE WITCH GIRL.
MY RULE WAS CENTURIES IN THE MAKING.
MY FOLLOWERS BELIEVE I CAN NEVER BE STOPPED.
UNGH!
YEAH? I TEND TO BELIEVE THE UNIVERSE PUT ME HERE FOR A REASON.
BOTH ME AN' GOD ARE MAKING UP FOR OUR MISTAKES.
EVERY WITCH ALSO GETS A FAMILIAR...
Kcatta rialimaf!!
I CHOSE FLESH-EATING BACTERIA. COOL, HUH?
MY BOYS WON'T KILL HIM. HE'S THE MURDER MESSIAH.
HIS SYSTEM WILL BEAT THEM. BUT THEY'LL GIVE ME TIME...
AND I NEED TIME TO BE ON MY SIDE JUST THIS ONCE.

HUNH, THA--
SKAK'E
THAT GOT TO YA, HUH?
IT MUSTA, CUZ THIS HERE ALPHA PREDATOR IS STILL ALIVE.
HAHA!
AWOOOOOOO!
I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU, DALE.
BUT YOU'RE HUNTING IN MY TERRITORY, AND I CAN'T HAVE THAT.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO END UP...
NOOOO--ƎƎ
BUT I BET THERE WON'T BE SAMMICHES, YOU FAT FUCK.

EMINENCE, INDIANA.
NOW.
ARE YOU THERE, SHERIFF?
THIS IS REILLY.
JUST DRIVING BY THE ELSTEN PLACE.
MAKING SURE NOTHING UNUSUAL--
SHEERRAAK
WHAT THE HELL?!
UNGH. OH GOD.
THAT WAS WORSE THAN LAST TIME.
HUHUKK'K...
MA'AM, ARE YOU OKAY?
HUNH...I NEED TO FIND CHRIS AND LISA.
DO YOU KNOW THEM?
LISA ELSTEN? YES, I--
SHE HAS TO KNOW.
SHE HAS TO TELL CASSIE...
SAMHAIN IS AKAKIOS.
HE'S THE LEADER OF THE BLACK LAMP.
THE BLACK LAMP IS GOING TO RELEASE A TOXIN.
THEY'RE GOING TO TAKE OVER AMERICA.

THEY'LL KILL MILLIONS. THEY HAVE TO STOP SAMHAIN NOW...
BEFORE IT'S TOO--
PHUNNT
HIGHWAY 10.
NEAR WAUSAU, FLORIDA.
DO YOU WISH TO SPEAK ABOUT IT, CASSANDRA?
NO. THERE'S NOTHING IN THE PAST TO DISCUSS.
IT'S ALL BAD.
HORRIBLE.
DARK AND BLOODY.
HURR I WILL BE QUIET THEN.
NO. I WANT YOU TO TALK.
BUT NOT ABOUT YESTERDAY.
NOT EVEN ABOUT TODAY...
"TELL ME ABOUT TOMORROW, MISTER BRIGHT-AND-FUCKING-ROSY."

NEF.
NOW.
NOW IT IS I/WE WHO ARE CEASELESSLY BLUBBERING!
BUT NOW OUR/MY PAIN IS VALID!
OUR/MY EXPERIMENT TO CREATE A NEW AVATAR FROM ASHLEY GUTHRIE HAS FAILED!
A COLOSSAL EFFORT WASTED!
LAMENTS AND DAMNATIONS! OUR/MY ONLY OFFSPRING--A STILLBORN!
STI!!!LLBORNNN...

TO BE CONTINUED IN HACK/SLASH #1, FROM IMAGE COMICS.